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IS 4-H CLUB WORK PRACTICAL?

A radio talk by Lulu Tregoning, Assistant State Club Leader, Ames, Iowa, delivered Saturday, August 6, 1932, in the national 4-H club radio program, broadcast by a network of 59 associate NBC radio stations.

How are you, friends of the 4-H clubs? I want to talk over with you today the practices learned in club work from the standpoint of economy. From the time they began, 4-H clubs have stressed practical methods with economy. Every club member keeps a record of his work including the cost of materials, the value of the finished products and the saving of money.

Iowa girls enrolled in canning projects first learn how to plan a garden so they can get the most vegetables into a small space, what vegetables will grow best in their part of the State and the methods of caring for the garden. They can for good nutrition and good variety, after they have figured the canning budget for the family for the year. Ruth has told you how one of our former state presidents planned and canned food for her boarding house at college and thru meal planning and serving of meals paid most of her expenses for one college year. Many club girls this year are not only canning for the family but are canning every bit of surplus to help feed the needy in their communities.

Even when money was much more plentiful than it is now, club girls were convincing the people in their communities with actual figures that one saved half by baking bread. The girls in Adair County included the cost of equipment, labor and fuel and proved they were 50% below the bread bill incurred previously by their families. Even now the girls have found they still save almost one half on a loaf made with all milk and a high grade of flour. They have learned to utilize home grown wheat and home milled flour by adapting the method of making bread to the kind of flour used. In doing this, they have not sacrificed standards and have saved one half of the flour bill besides helping the home miller.

"From attic to usefulness" is one of the slogans in clothing. The girls in clothing clubs have even made club uniforms and made other household articles from feed sacks (these almost resemble linen). Esther Everett said she has done almost as much ripping as sewing, all the time learning selection, construction, color, line and simplicity. Thru clothing, Esther made a lovely blue velvet dress at cost of \$.35 from a dress which had been her grandmother's. She learned to buy clothing out of season at sales so she could have these for college the next season. I've seen her clean a hat, turn it and retrim - never would you have guessed that it had been worn a couple of seasons. Every girl plans a clothing budget and knows exactly what she needs for the next season and how much she has to spend.

In home furnishing, the girls have learned to use appropriate, inexpensive materials, to appreciate and refinish the fine, substantial furniture of grandmother's day. They have made entire rooms into attractive places by refinishing the walls, floors, woodwork and furniture. This year we are find-

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ing that our demonstration teams are thrilled and happy over making something lovely from materials at hand with no expenditure in some cases and small expenditure in others. I was told of a girl who is trying to get a dress out of 1-1/2 yards of material. She says she is having real fun planning and she has interested her community in the problem.

Then there is the keeping of a personal account and learning to budget expenditures. Lucille Gring of Dallas County, Iowa, a former 4-H girl, now a college graduate and teacher tells you in the following story what personal accounts mean to her:

"Club work has been one of the most practical things in my life. I learned for the first time that it was possible and even expected that young girls save money, even though they had no definite source of income. I had saved about \$200 by the time I graduated from high school. These savings alone were not enough to put me thru college, but because of recognition I had received in my club work (expense accounts included) a friend became interested and was willing to loan me money for my four years of college. When I completed my college course and received a position as a teacher, the school board in verifying the fact that I was well trained to handle the position, cited my previous accomplishments in club work as the first and most important value of my training and experience. Now, after one year of work I have paid back one fourth of my debts."

I have cited here a few typical examples of what 4-H girls are doing in the way of contributing to their own funds and to the family income. If club work was not considered practical, I should like to ask if 1525 leaders and girls would have attended all the sessions of the recent Convention held in our own state, every member and leader being financed by their own clubs and how thrilled they have been in what they have gained from that program to carry them through another year.

I want to say in closing, that our leaders and girls have a fine attitude and are really getting joy and satisfaction in accepting the challenge of this period in which we are living. They say, "It tests our ingenuity and skill; it keeps us on our tiptoes!" "Our fine ancestors met the challenge; we can not fail them."